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STATE FOR TODD STERN; NSC FOR MICHAEL FROMAN AND SAMANTHA
POWER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/18/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SENV](#)
SUBJECT: BAN KI MOON URGES POTUS PARTICIPATION IN CLIMATE
MINI-SUMMIT TALKS

Classified By: Ambassador Rice, For Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) During a small dinner at the UN Secretary General's residence the Secretary General pulled Ambassador Rice aside to again reiterate the importance he places on President Obama attending the proposed "mini summit" on climate change in March. Ban said he was concerned that as yet there had been no decision regarding the President's attendance and that he needed an answer quickly.

¶2. (C) Comment: At every opportunity, the Secretary General has pressed Ambassador Rice about his invitation for President Obama to attend the climate change "mini summit." His most recent plea sounded almost desperate and clearly demonstrated that he believes his own credibility is at stake. To ensure the President's attendance, Ban said he was flexible on the timing of the summit, whether at the end of March or even after the G-20 meeting in London in April, though far less desirable. Given Ban's personal investment in climate change, Ambassador Rice sensed a subtle suggestion for the first time that Ban's ability and willingness to support USG requests for high-level UN positions could be diminished by U.S. non-attendance. Ambassador Rice thinks we need to take this into account, but she believes the USG should make a decision on the "mini-summit" based on the merits of the event. However, it is important that we provide an answer soonest. End comment.
Rice